

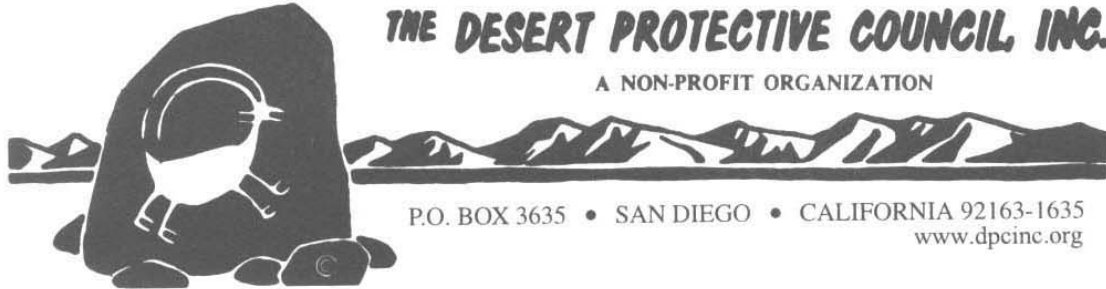
#21-1 Thank you for your support.

#21-2 Facilities permitted to be developed in a State Park are subject to Public Resources Code 5019.53, which limits facilities to those that make areas available for public enjoyment in a manner consistent with preservation of park resources and values, that are not attractions unto themselves, and are not otherwise available to the public within a reasonable distance outside the Park. The types of visitor-serving facilities mentioned may be appropriate to develop to support the recreational needs of visitors to the Park. There may not be an opportunity to provide these facilities outside the boundary of the Park. The Plan proposes that these types of facilities, if they were to be developed, would best be located in Focused Use Zone I (FUZI), which is limited to five locations totaling less than 2,300 acres or less than one-half of one percent of Park's acreage. These areas are generally located where development already exists, and where higher concentrations of people are anticipated.

#21-3 The Plan proposes to continue the closure of Coyote Canyon to through vehicular travel, however, vehicles are permitted on the existing routes in the canyon north and south of the 3.1 mile closure. Roads in Coyote Canyon will be further reviewed under the proposed Roads Management Plan (See page 3-59 of the Preliminary General Plan.)

#21-4 See Response # 21-2. The plan allows for the development of a paved airstrip (page 5-14 of Preliminary General Plan), however, this airport landing strip and two hangers are already developed on the site. Please also see Response # 12-9.

#21-5 Thank you for your support of adding additional wilderness. California State Parks agrees that the flora and fauna, and the desert landscapes, merit this level of protection.



DESERT PROTECTIVE COUNCIL
ADVISORY PANEL

SYLVIA BROADBENT
Professor of Archaeology

GEORGE W. COX
Conservation Ecologist

PETE DANGERMOND
Park Consultant

BETTY FORGEY
Desert Tortoise Activist

MICHAEL FROME
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AUGUST FRUGE
Conservationist

LARRY IWERKS
Wilderness Advocate

WILBUR MAYHEW
Professor of Zoology

ART MONTANA
Professor of Earth Sciences

ALLAN MUTH
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KAREN SAUSMAN
BioPark Director

ROBERT STEBBINS
Herpetologist

LEONARD VINCENT
Professor of Biology

HOWARD WILSHIRE
Geologist

September 9, 2004

California State Parks and Recreation Commission
Environmental Coordinator

RE: Anza-Borrego Desert State Park General Plan

Dear Commissioners:

The Desert Protective Council has reviewed the draft General Plan and DEIR for the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. The Preferred Plan Alternative is closest to the vision that we have for the future of this valuable desert area. We would like to emphasize the following points, and suggest a few wording changes, which we feel would strengthen the Plan.

We are pleased to see that the emphasis in the Park's Declaration of Purpose is on protection of the Park's biological and cultural resources, and that recreational activities may be permitted only when they are compatible with this primary goal. We strongly concur with this direction.

We would like to encourage as little major new development within the park as possible. Specifically, we urge the following:

- that new structural facilities for accommodating park visitors (lodges, cabins, commercial activities of all types) be located outside the park boundaries;
- that no road be constructed through Coyote Canyon and that no private motorized vehicles be permitted to travel through this canyon;
- that no new airport facilities be constructed within the Park.

We concur with the additional wilderness areas that have been proposed in the Preferred Plan. The unique desert flora and fauna within ABDSP merit this level of protection.

We congratulate your staff on the hard work that went into preparing this draft plan and EIR, and thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on it.

For the Desert Protective Council

Janet Anderson
Janet Anderson, President

To safeguard for wise and reverent use by this and succeeding generations those desert areas of unique scenic, scientific, historical, spiritual and recreational value, and, to educate children and adults to a better understanding of the deserts.

21-1

21-2

21-3

21-4

21-5

#22-1 California State Parks (CSP) agrees that a General Plan is needed to protect and preserve the resources of ABDSP for present and future generations. The General Plan will allow appropriate facility development and direct park managers in resource preservation. CSP agrees that protection of all the Park's values must be addressed in every management plan for the Park.

#22-2 Support for the Preferred Plan and opposition to Alternatives 1 & 2 noted. California State Parks (CSP) appreciates your support for the ABDSP General Plan and the efforts that both the park staff and public have undertaken in its preparation. CSP concurs that the Cultural and Natural Management Plans are high priority. As state funding opportunities allow, we will expeditiously pursue completion of these plans. It is possible that the completion of these plans will be done in phases to allow the most critical resources issues to be addressed sooner. As discussed in the General Plan, these planning efforts will be subject to CEQA compliance, and appropriate public review, as focused projects under the General Plan.



P.O. Box 2368 • Sacramento, CA 95812-2368
phone: (530) 333-2545
e-mail: capeer@peer.org

August 20, 2004

Environmental Coordinator
Southern Service Center
California Department of Parks and Recreation
8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270
San Diego, CA 92108

Re: Anza Borrego Desert State Park General Management Plan

To whom it may concern:

22-1 On behalf of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) and our 1200 California members, I urge adoption of the Anza Borrego Desert State Park General Management Plan. PEER is a non-profit association of federal and state biologists, engineers, law enforcement personnel and other employees dedicated to seeing their respective agencies comply with the legal and ethical guidelines for protecting the environment.

Anza Borrego is the jewel of the state and federal desert parks system. Protection of its scenic, cultural, recreational and habitat values must be included in any management plan.

22-2 The Anza-Borrego Desert State Park GMP is a sound document that balances the needs of people with the protection of the environment. The GMP is the result of years of study and a great deal of public input. It provides a blueprint for how to meet the growing demands of visitors to the park while meeting its primary goal of protecting the natural and cultural resources of the Park.

The Park's stated goals and guidelines set forth a proactive strategy to protect its resources through management within park boundaries, participation in planning processes and partnerships outside of park boundaries where activities may impact park resources, and through acquisition of properties surrounding the park.

PEER supports the Preferred Alternative and encourages that the Cultural Resources and Natural Resources Management Plans be prepared immediately following approval of the GMP to provide a baseline for other management plans.
We oppose Alternatives 1 and 2, which would allow for significant impact of sensitive resources.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Karen Schambach

Karen Schambach
California Director

#23-1 California State Parks (CSP) appreciates your membership's special interest in ABDSP and its management as a premier desert area.

#23-2 Over five years of background studies and planning efforts have been undertaken in preparation of the ABDSP General Plan, in part because of the vast size of the Park and the complexity of the Parks resources, including recreation resources. CSP agrees that the Preferred Plan represents a balanced plan, taking into consideration the recreational needs of all the park users and the laws that govern the use and management of State Parks.

#23-3 It is CSP's intention to continue to balance the recreational needs of all Park visitors to the extent possible within the goals and guidelines proposed in the Preliminary General Plan. There is no intention to emphasize the needs of one user group over the needs of another user group, nor to sacrifice the Park's objectives to satisfy the desires of any one special interest.

#23-4 Support for the Preferred Plan noted. CSP must implement management strategies to protect the Park's resources regardless of the alternative chosen. However, CSP agrees that adoption of Alternatives 1 or 2 would not allow implementation of management strategies consistent with the Park's purpose or provide the same level of protection for the Park's resources. CSP concurs that the Cultural and Natural Management Plans are high priority. As state funding opportunities allow, we will expeditiously pursue completion of these plans. It is possible that the completion of these plans will be done in phases to allow the most critical resources issues to be addressed sooner. As discussed in the General Plan, these planning efforts will be subject to CEQA compliance, and appropriate public review, as focused projects under the General Plan.

Environmental Coordinator
Southern Service Center
California Dept. of Parks & Recreation
8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270
San Diego, CA 92108

September 11, 2004

RE: The Anza-Borrego Desert State Park General Management Plan

Environmental Coordinator:

23-1 Desert Survivors is a non-profit desert conservation organization based in Oakland, California. Desert Survivors has an interest in lands governed by the California Department of Parks & Recreation, and will be impacted by the proposed management plan referenced above. Desert Survivors leads educational and recreational excursions in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park as part of its responsibility as a California public benefit, non-profit corporation. Desert Survivors has led many trips to Anza-Borrego Desert State Park and its Wilderness Areas. Desert Survivors has an interest in seeing the Park continue in a natural and pristine condition, and has a special interest in the management of Anza-Borrego. Desert Survivors has 800 members.

23-2 As President of Desert Survivors, I am dismayed by the reaction of certain special interests toward the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park General Management Plan. This plan was generated after years of public input from a wide variety of citizens and should not be cast aside to serve the needs of a privileged few who would rather drive around on public land like wild men instead of walking and appreciating the scenery as normal people do. The Plan is a balanced approach that serves the needs of visitors while protecting cultural resources and nature. There are plenty of places set aside for off-road vehicle lovers to ride. They don't have to trash our state parks.

23-3 The Park's General Plan seeks to protect resources through sound land management, participation in partnerships with the public, and planned acquisition of sensitive private lands. All are necessary in the 21st Century if the State Park Departments' objectives are to be reached. Emphasizing off-roaders' needs will interfere with this process.

23-4 Desert Survivors supports the Preferred Alternative, which protects more Wilderness than the others. Our group is also sensitive to cultural resources and supports protection of the maximum amount that the Plan proposes: 44,500 acres. This park was established to protect both the natural values (Wilderness) and the cultural values of the region, thus the name "Anza" (cultural) and "borrego", for the wild sheep (natural). Alternatives 1 and 2 allow too much impact on sensitive resources. Management plans for cultural resources and natural resources must be developed and implemented right away, once the general plan is set. Otherwise, off-road vehicle users and others will do more damage to the land.

#23-5 The Park will be managed in accordance with its declared purpose, mission, and vision (pages 3-6 thru 3-8) as outlined by the goals and guidelines contained in the Preliminary General Plan. Protection of the values mentioned as important to your membership are supported by proposed Plan.

page 2

23-5

This Park should not be a playground for jaded and unthinking yahoos who just like to tear things up. If they want to drive around like maniacs, they can find a motocross track, a toxic waste dump, or an abandoned military base. Our parks should be a wonder for all sensitive persons to enjoy. Our members like the animals, the flowers, the geology and the sky, the history and the archaeology. The Park should be managed for those values.

Sincerely,



Steve Tabor, President
Desert Survivors
P.O. Box 20991
Oakland, CA 94620-0991

(510) 769-1706

[<president@desert-survivors.org>](mailto:president@desert-survivors.org)

Desert Survivors
2130-C Clinton Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

#24-1 CSP works on a yearly basis to agree to an MOU with the San Diego Hang Glider and Paraglider Association to maintain a cooperative effort to allow take-offs from Kwaaymii Point and allow landings there and in Earthquake Valley near Co. Rd. S-2. It is the intent of CSP to continue to work together with the SDHG&PA.

#24-2 Thank you for the comment. CSP notes that the environment at ABDSP adds significantly to the enjoyment of your sport. It is the intent of the Park Purpose to preserve that environment that adds to the quality of your experience.

#24-3 CSP agrees that the experience of solitude is key to recreational enjoyment at ABDSP and appreciates noting the experience from the hang glider's perspective..

Dear California Department of Parks and Recreation,

24-1 My name is James Gaar. I'm a hang glider pilot and manager of a flying club in Kansas. I wanted to write you in support of maintaining the flying status of hang gliders as part of the Preliminary General Plan for Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. Currently hang gliders are allowed to fly from Kwaaymii Point. My hope and the hope of many pilots both local and from outside the region and country is that this privilege will remain as part of the final plan.

Within the updated Declaration of Purpose is the following statement:

"The purpose of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park is to preserve the unique and diverse natural, cultural, and scenic resources of this Western Colorado Desert Region and to provide opportunities for high quality recreation that supports a healthy natural environment."

24-2 That purpose could have been written for the sport of hang gliding alone! The hang gliding community is as unique and diverse as any in the world. We are pilots that together with our families and friends also seek to preserve the natural and scenic resources of not only the Western Colorado Desert Region but all other resources like it around the world. When we are not flying, most of us utilize the other opportunities that these resources provide us.

As one might imagine, flying hang gliders takes dedication and commitment in order to be safe and fun. The result of that approach is what makes hang gliding one of the highest quality recreational sports ever created. That same dedication and commitment is what makes the hang gliding community so strong, even though we are a small select group.

Also within the updated Declaration of Purpose it states:

"This desert park environment nurtures peaceful solitude, astronomical clarity, amazing forms of life, glimpse of the past, and a tremendous scope for the imagination."

24-3 What a beautiful purpose. As hang glider pilots these are the words we too might use to describe our sport. As pilots we seek to thrive in the peaceful solitude of the sky, well above the noise and confusion of the world below, scanning the horizon, observing the amazing forms of life below. As we glide silently overhead, if one was to catch a glimpse of us they may very well be reminded of how far aviation has come in the last 100 years. One might also imagine from the ground how glorious the feeling of free flight would be as if they could stretch out their arms and rise with the birds on invisible currents of air.

#24-4 Please see Response # 24-1.

#24-5 Thank you for your willingness to support the interpretive programs of the Park. It is partnerships with organizations such as yours that truly make State Parks relevant to the visiting public.

24-3
(cont'd) Just as the Declaration of Purpose states, our goals as hang glider pilots also seek to preserve, instill appreciation for, and to make available any and all treasured qualities and experiences for the present and future generations of people AND hang glider pilots.

24-4 On behalf of hang glider pilots, their families and friends around the world, please consider maintaining and improving the current status of privileges for us with-in the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, specifically the launch site located at Kwaaymii Point

24-5 I have no doubt that our national organization, The Unites States Hang Glider Association* (USHGA) would willingly cooperate with the California Department of Parks and Recreation to help bring about any resources necessary to preserve and reestablish the General Plans primary interpretive themes for programs and activities.

Sincerely,

James Gaar
Manager,
Adventure AirSports, LLC
Former Director/Honorary Director, USHGA
Pilot Registration #73864
4924 Canterbury
Roeland Park, KS 66205-1619
913.236.4461 (hm)
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816.235.1094 (wk)

*USHGA
P. O. Box 1330
Colorado Springs CO 80901
(800) 616 6888

#25-1 Low Impact climbing has been accepted within ABDSP and thus far has not presented negative impacts or issues. It is appreciated that the organizations mentioned have taken it upon themselves to work closely with agencies to preserve the park and to exercise discipline among the members.

Rock climbing includes such activities as staging of vehicles, staging of participants and their gear, obtaining access to climbing locations, creation of climbing routes (which may involve chalking, securing ropes, etc), and the actual climbing. All of these activities have the potential to damage archaeological sites (e.g., both sites on the ground and prehistoric rock art on a vertical rock surface), vegetation (both on the ground and that found on rocky slopes), sensitive animal habitat (e.g., raptor nesting areas, watering holes, burrows, and others), sensitive geologic features, fossil beds, and other resources.

#25-2 Please see Response # 25-1. State Parks staff members welcome the opportunity to work closely with you and other rock climbing enthusiasts to identify park locations that both meet your recreational interests and are located away from sensitive park resources, such as those listed above. Thank you for your interest in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park[®].

E-MAIL

Hello,

I write to you on behalf of the San Diego County rock climbing community. I am the author and publisher of the SD County Climbing Guide, and San Diego Adventures: classic hiking, mountain biking & rock climbing. Earlier this year I began forming a local climber advocacy group, the San Diego Alliance of Climbers (SANDAC)

www.deadpointpress.com/sandac. Climbers in the U.S. are further represented by the Access Fund, a nationwide non-profit group www.accessfund.org. Climbers form a relatively small but important user group in Anza-Borrego, primarily at two areas: Culp Valley and Dos Cabezas. Activity at these areas dates to at least the 70s (and possibly much earlier) and in recent years, interest in these sites has been increasing. Climbers practice a low-impact presence and have demonstrated this at areas nationwide. Locally, we have proven good citizenship at popular areas such as Mission Trails Regional Park, Mt. Woodson, and various National Forest areas. In Cuyamaca State Park, Stonewall Peak has long been accepted as a climbing area and is a somewhat historical site (though ravaged by the Cedar Fire).

I feel any management plan for Anza-Borrego must include and recognize rock climbing. We are more than willing to show how important these resources are by investing manpower to help clean up areas, install trail markers (a very effective method of reducing use trails utilized at Joshua Tree National Park, the most popular climbing area in the world), and most anything else deemed necessary to retain usage. As an example, once a year climbers around the country stage what is called an Adopt-a-Crag. Sponsored by the Access Fund and corporations like the North Face and REI, these events pool climbers together to build and repair trails, clean up trash, etc. I will be staging my third such event (in only its fourth year) this September at Mt. Woodson in cooperation with the city of Poway, who welcomes our efforts.

As I mentioned earlier, climbers are a small user group and we feel our impact is not significant. We do generate willpower to keep what we think we are entitled to, and climbing in Borrego is very import. Personally, it represent some of the finest backcountry experiences I've had in San Diego. I have explored Anza-Borrego since the 60s, and climbed since 1984. It is one of the best places in the state in my opinion, and I hope rock climbing can be recognized as it has at so many other areas.

Sincerely,
Dave Kennedy
San Diego Alliance of Climbers
Deadpoint Press
3764 Cameo Lane
San Diego 92111
858-278-6532
dpoint@utm.net

#26-1 Thank you for your support of the preferred plan. California State Parks (CSP) agrees that the proposed plan provides a balance between resource protection and a reasonable increase in visitor facilities and opportunities, and reflects the values of the majority of the visiting public.

#26-2 CSP agrees with your assessment of the placement of the focused use zones.

#26-3 CSP agrees that the proposed wilderness provides further protection of the values stated as important to park users. Nevertheless, it is possible that sensitive resource areas may need to be designated as preserves to ensure their protection. The two areas suggested will be considered during development of the Cultural Resources Management Plan and Natural Resources Management Plan, as appropriate.

#26-4 Guidelines 1a and 1d for Exotic Biota (page 3-25) continues ecological restoration, particularly of riparian areas. Ecological restoration will also be included as part of the Natural Resources Management Plan.

#26-5 Thank you for your support. CSP agrees that there are many opportunities at Vallecito Ranch for recreation, natural resource restoration, and preservation and interpretation of key elements of the region's history.

#26-6 CSP agrees, thank you for your support.

#26-7 Comments have been received both in support and in opposition to the Coyote Canyon closure.

To whom it may concern:

- 26-1 Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Preliminary General Plan for Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. As a long-time visitor to Anza-Borrego and commentator on park issues, I applaud DPR staff on such a thorough, well balanced, and forward-looking plan.
- 26-1 In my estimation, the Plan hits a home-run. It offers a balance between protection and a reasonable increase in visitor facilities and opportunities. This emphasis on protection with a small increase in facilities fits the desires of most park visitors as expressed in the "Visitor Study." These visitors' reasons for coming to the park include "scenic beauty, unique characteristics, wildness, nature displays, and sanctuary for wildlife." These visitors "expressed an interest that the Park be managed as a refuge, and as a showcase for displays of nature. . actions related to the preservation of the Park's resources are viewed as more important than changes in facilities, or development targeting recreational use."
- 26-2 The Focused Use Zones are well placed. The higher intensity Zone 1 areas are mostly already impacted areas such as the Borrego Palm Canyon campground and the Vern Whitaker Horse Camp. The Zone 2 areas such as Blair Valley will minimize impacts from camping by designating sites rather than the current camping-at-large approach. Directing the use seems necessary in this area, where large swaths of bare ground have developed as people search for informal, unmarked campsites.
- 26-3 The addition of 56,000 acres of wilderness designation and one natural/cultural preserve will provide lasting protection of the values most visitors say they want preserved: wildness, solitude, and wildlife. Wilderness protection is the park's best defense against utility corridors, and also preserves opportunities for recreation of a primitive and unconfined nature. Additional natural/cultural preserves may be necessary, perhaps at the Indian Hill/China Camp area and in Rockhouse Valley (north).
- 26-4 The park's ecological restoration efforts have been outstanding and should continue.
- 26-5 The planned management of the recently acquired Vallecito Ranch provides a good example of the balanced approach the General Plan is taking. Some portion of the heavily impacted agricultural fields can easily be converted into developed and/or primitive camping, with no additional loss of native habitat. Ranch roads can be used for multi-use trails open to mountain bikes, providing a recreational opportunity to a user group that is excluded from much of the park. Historic trails and structures will be preserved and interpreted for the public. Most important, the wetlands at Vallecito Creek will be restored, providing a great benefit to the Peninsular bighorn sheep.
- 26-6 In all, the General Plan promises to preserve Anza-Borrego's unique combination of near pristine conditions (well over 400,000 acres of wilderness) and unfettered access (hundreds of miles of existing jeep roads and a continued open camping policy in most places).
- 26-7 Still, the plan will have its detractors, mostly those who are unhappy with the Coyote Canyon Public Use Plan and specifically the closure of the Middle Willows portion of Coyote Canyon to

#26-8 CSP agrees and this is so noted by park management.

#26-9 CSP agrees with the opportunity for a “living history” experience in the segment of the Juan Bautista de Anza Historic Trail closed to vehicles in Coyote Canyon, and the importance of preserving the opportunity for such experiences for future generations.

#26-10 CSP agrees. CSP remains committed to providing equal accessibility to all programs at ABDSP while minimizing potential impacts to sensitive resources.

26-7
(cont'd) vehicle traffic. These critics are likely to submit a large number of comments through an organized letter writing campaign. I would point out that the conservation organizations of which I'm aware (principally the Sierra Club) have refrained from a similar campaign to deluge Parks Department staff with a great number of identical comments, out of respect for staff time.

26-8 Instead of looking at the numbers of comments to this Plan, I encourage decision makers (the Parks Commission, Governor Schwarzenegger) to bear in mind the desires of park visitors as expressed in the "Visitor Study." A quick look at the visitor comments at the end of the study shows that preservation-oriented comments greatly outnumber the "build more jeep trails" comments. This same preference was revealed by visitors to Coyote Canyon in the report titled "Ecological Conditions in Coyote Canyon." According to the report, "the visitors surveyed ranked protection of natural resources a top management priority and they strongly supported current park management. Increasing the amount of off-road access in the canyon was the least supported management action, both within Coyote Canyon and park-wide. In conclusion, there was convincing evidence that the Plan provided a high quality of resource health, and improved resource protection. Scientific literature and monitoring data support the conclusion that management actions specified by the Coyote Canyon Public Use Plan, particularly the road closure and cowbird and tamarisk control, were beneficial."

26-9 In addition to the benefits to the environment, the road closure also provides a more authentic experience of the canyon's much-lauded pioneer heritage. Coyote Canyon is part of the Juan Bautista de Anza Historic Trail, and the Middle Willows segment is one of the few (and perhaps the only) sections of the trail in which equestrians and hikers can be free of the noise, dust and pollution of modern vehicles. These visitors can experience the canyon much the way Anza did in 1774. The hikers in the canyon include not just the stereotypical "elitist" backpacker, but also many Boy Scout troops from San Diego and Riverside counties. If the park doesn't exist to preserve such bits of living history for groups like the Boy Scouts, what does it exist for?

26-10 Much has been made of accessibility for the disabled at Middle Willows. For those not able to walk the 3 miles into Middle Willows, similar environments and experiences are accessible by vehicle at Lower Willows, Upper Willows and nearby Sheep Canyon. While 3.1 miles of the jeep trail in Coyote Canyon are closed, around 20 miles of jeep trails remain open in Coyote Canyon alone, as well as the hundreds of miles of jeep trails in the rest of the park.

I believe that approval of the General Plan for Anza-Borrego Desert State Park is in the best interests of the park environment and of the people of California.

Larry Hogue

Author, "All the Wild and Lonely Places: Journeys in a Desert Landscape"
3590 Stetson Avenue San Diego, CA 92122

#27-1 CSP appreciates your acknowledgement of the efforts made in this very important planning effort. We believe the document has and will benefit further from those willing to participate in the on-going process.

#27-2 CSP agrees that plan was written with a broad spectrum of input from general audiences at many meetings throughout southern California as well as from focus groups invited to address specific interests.

#27-3 CSP agrees that the plan represents a balance of meeting the needs of the various interest groups within the mission of protecting resources as a result of the many hours spent by both staff and the public in formulating the plan.

#27-4 CSP agrees that the General Plan will help future park managers address the increased visitor use anticipated with nearby population growth.

Comment Letter 27 -- Lindsay

From: "Diana Lindsay" <dlindsay@sunbeltpub.com>
To: <enviro@parks.ca.gov>, <anzagp@parks.ca.gov>
Date: Mon, Sep 13, 2004 11:45
Subject: Comments on Anza-Borrego General Plan (DEIR)
Letter also as attachment

September 13, 2004

Attention: Environmental Coordinator
Southern Service Center
California Department of Parks and Recreation
8885 Rio San Diego, Suite 270
San Diego, CA 92108

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)
Anza-Borrego Desert State Park

To Whom It May Concern:

- 27-1 A very important moment is at hand. A decision will be made on the proposed General Plan for Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. It is a plan upon which the very future of the park will be decided as future management plans and strategies are constructed upon its foundation. It is a plan that has been years in the formulation that has included a 5-year effort to inventory all park resources - no easy task in a park that is more than 90 per cent the size of the state of Rhode Island and half of the California State Park System.
- 27-2 Extreme care has been taken to consider all issues and interested parties because it is known that those opposed to the General Plan will attempt to show that their interests have been thwarted or ignored, and nothing could be further from the truth. Three rounds of public meetings have been held in key population areas where park interests are primarily located: San Diego, Riverside, and Borrego Springs. Also, two focused-group meetings have been held for special interests, such as off-road enthusiasts, hang gliders, equestrians, and conservation groups. Park staff has met with special interests, which include mountain bikers. They have also met with the Off Highway Vehicle Division and off highway interests to make sure that all designated trails are on all base maps. The plan has been well advertised and has been readily accessible to those interested on the web, at the state park office, at libraries, at the Southern Service Center, and on university campuses. All have had the opportunity to comment on the plan and recommend changes throughout the process, and most importantly, many of those recommendations have been incorporated into the final plan.
- 27-3 It has not been easy to meet the needs of so many interests, and it is to be expected that everyone will not be happy. But what is important is that the process has included input from all interests and has made recommendations based on the park's mission to provide enjoyment of park resources while preserving them in perpetuity for future generations. And that it has done. It has maintained the policy of open camping within backcountry and wilderness zones; it has designated zones for intensive development of operational facilities and developed campgrounds; it has reaffirmed the policy of protecting habitat for bighorn sheep and endangered species; it has recommended cultural preserves for additional protection of sensitive archaeological sites; it is committed to creating or rerouting roads and trails based on environmental and management studies, and it has recommended 56,000 acres of new state wilderness. Literally, millions of tax dollars and thousands of hours of staff time have been invested in the development of this plan.
- 27-4 The demand on the use of park lands will only increase as the current 20 million people who live within three hours of driving time from the park continue to grow in numbers. You have the opportunity to do the right thing for future generations that will find the park experience and its resources even more valuable as open

California State Parks Responses

#27-5 Support for the Coyote Canyon Public Use Plan noted.

#27-6 Thank you for your enthusiastic support..

Comment Letter 27 -- Lindsay

27-4
(cont'd) urban areas disappear with increased population. I call on you to support the efforts of dedicated staff and volunteers who have given it their best shot. Don't let uninformed or selfish special interests destroy a great plan, which allows for managed development and protection.

27-5 Also, support and affirm the Coyote Canyon Public Use Plan. Reopening a sensitive riparian area to off-road vehicles makes no sense. As a guidebook author, I can attest that the route through Coyote Canyon was heavily used. Vehicles deposited oil in the streambed, contaminating the water and preventing natural growth in the area because of the constant traffic. As it exists today, the willows area remains open to less destructive intrusion - hikers on foot, bicyclists, and equestrians. This level of intrusion allows the federally endangered animals to exist, and hopefully thrive.

27-6 Anza-Borrego Desert State Park can only be talked about in superlatives. It has received world acclaim for its unbroken Plio-Pleistocene fossil record. It is a United Nations Biosphere Reserve and a National Natural Landmark, and it is one of the very few places on the planet where one can drive through nine millions of years of time that is exposed to the earth's service. This park deserves a plan that will protect all of its resources while providing for recreational use. The current plan does that.

I have been intimately involved with Anza-Borrego Desert State Park for over 35 years as a researcher (MA degree in history from SDSU with a thesis on the history of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park that was later published by Copley Books of San Diego as Our Historic Desert), guidebook author (The Anza-Borrego Desert Region, published by Wilderness Press - now in its 4th edition), and lecturer (on various topics concerning the park).

I urge you to adopt this General Plan in its entirety.

Sincerely,

Diana Lindsay, President
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CC: "Mark Jorgensen" <MJORGENSEN.PO_FIELD.Field@parks.ca.gov>, "Jim Davis" <jdavis@ci.el-cajon.ca.us>, "Linda Carson" <info@theabf.org>, "Brian Cahill" <BCAHILL.PO_FIELD.Field@parks.ca.gov>

#28-1 Thank you for your attendance and interest in ABDSP and the General Plan process.

#28-2 California State Parks (CSP) ranger reports have also documented damages to park resources.

#28-3 CSP agrees that directing the patterns of use will allow visitors to enjoy ABDSP while preserving the Park's resources.

#28-4 CSP supports responsible off-road use by highway-legal vehicles on designated roads in ABDSP. CSP agrees that the planning tools presented in the General Plan will provide direction to protect the biological and cultural values at ABDSP. Please also see Response 8-1. Thank you for your support.

E-MAIL

September 12, 2004

From: Pat Flanagan
71575 Mesa Dr. (P.O. Box 1313)
Twentynine Palms, CA 92277

To: Environmental Coordinator
Southern Service Center
California Department of Parks and Recreation
8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270
San Diego, CA 92108
Sent by email

Dear Environmental Coordinator:

28-1 I have had a residence in the Anza-Borrego State Park area since 1979—685 Wells Fargo Trail, Earthquake Valley. For a number of years I lived there full time before moving to San Diego and then Twentynine Palms. I continue to visit the area and have attended several of the Management Plan public hearings. I have a strong interest and educational background in desert ecosystems.

28-2 I have experienced all the desert's seasonal diversity as well as the major changes triggered by catastrophic conditions such as El Niños and multiple year droughts. I have also watched many areas change because of human use, not always intentional but permanent none-the-less; such as, the introduction of weedy species which swamp the local natives, the destruction of cultural sites, and vehicle tracks across virgin landscape.

28-3 The rich biological and cultural values of the Anza-Borrego Desert are based on its particular geology and unique occurrences of human occupation and life styles. This can be said about all the different areas of the California Deserts, which is why there can be no "substitute" protection--either an area is preserved, or it is lost. Preservation doesn't mean high walls and total hands off--it does mean careful patterns of use that are based on long-term study and consideration with flexibility for change based on new information.

28-4 Protection can only be achieved through systemwide planning actions. Judging from attendance by off-road enthusiasts at the hearings a high level of protection for the biological and cultural values will be difficult to achieve without a strong GMP in place. The desert is many things but it is not a playground without responsibility and lacking consequences. For this reason, I support either the Preferred Alternative or Alternative 3, both of which are sound documents that balance people's needs with environmental protection. Both alternatives reflect years of study and planning.

California State Parks Responses

Comment Letter 28 -- Flanagan

28-4
(cont'd)

Alternative 3, however, which implements the natural/cultural preserves to protect the complete integrity of an area, would prove to be the strongest blueprint for protection. Preserve status is also an educational tool informing the visitor of the need for greater caution during exploration.

Thank you for the extended period to respond and I congratulate the State Park for its conscientious work during the GMP process.

Sincerely,
Pat Flanagan

#29-1 There are approx. 25,000 acres of private inholdings within ABDSP, so each private parcel is not depicted on the maps in the GP. The subject property is not designated as State Wilderness, and never has been, but it is bounded by State Wilderness, State Park, and another private parcel. Please note that Figure 6.6 states that private land/inholdings may not always be indicated on these maps.

#29-2 The General Plan does not propose closure of the Fish Creek Road. California State Parks (CSP) will contact you, or the property owner at the time, if any change is proposed on Fish Creek Road that may affect your access.

#29-3 CSP respectfully disagrees. First, according to the CEQA Guidelines, economic effects are not considered environmental effects. Second, the General Plan discusses potential physical effects to private adjacent landowners in several locations. Please see Sections 2.1.3, 2.4.10, 3.2.4.1, 3.3.1.3, Fire Management and 3.3.1.2, Hydrology, Guideline Link 1b, 3.3.1.8, 3.3.2.8, Goal V/CR 4, and 4.5.6.

September 11, 2004

Comment On Draft EIR

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park
SCH# 2002021060

Tina Robinson

Department of Parks and Recreation
8885 Rio San Diego Dr. Suite 270
San Diego CA. 92108

29-1 I am the owner of 480 acres on Fish Creek Road the legal description is Northwest Quarter and the South Half of Section 13, Township 13 South, Range 8 East. SBBM.

The Draft EIR Map Figure 6.6 (Preferred Plan) shows that my land is to be listed as (Wilderness Zone.) The described land is private land and is not part of the Anza-Borrego State Park system and should not be shown as Wilderness Zone. My property located in Section 13 was Federal Lands that went into Private Lands on October 27, 1910 with all rights shown in (Deeds)


29-2 The Roadway known as Fish Creek Road also falls under (Federal RS.2477) and enclosed is a historic map showing this road in existance in 1908. I would like to contest any type of proposed road closure on Fish Creek Road and I would also like to request "Formal Notice" of any changes in roadway use, realignment or other changes in use. In the event that this vehicle road is to be reduced or restricted in any way from full moter vehicle access please contact me at

Brian Siefker
P O Box 658
Elk Grove CA. 95759
Ph 916-743-5417

29-3 I would also like to request the NO-Action Alternative because this EIR fails to address the economic and physical impacts to private adjacent landowners and to the community of Borrego Springs.

Thank You

Brian Siefker


cc: Mark Sipple Esq

#30-1 There are approx. 25,000 acres of private inholdings within ABDSP, so each private parcel is not depicted on the maps in the GP. Please note that Figures 6.2 and 6.6 state that private land/inholdings may not always be indicated on these maps. The maps are very small scale and would not be readable if all the private land/inholdings were shown. There is no attempt by California State Parks (CSP) to designate your property as State Wilderness, only property owned by CSP would be so designated. As long as there is an existing, designated road to your property, the route into your property also would not be designated as State Wilderness, even though it may lie within ABDSP.

Comment Letter 30 -- Korevaar

Dear Environmental Coordinator,

I understand that I should send comments regarding the ABDSP new General Plan to you prior to August 31. My name is Eric Korevaar and my address is 1720 Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla, CA 92037. I would like my comments to be part of the public record, and would like acknowledgement of such. (Please leave my email address out of the public record, however).

I am the owner of an 80 acre in-holding in ABDSP located on Granite Mountain south of Scissors Crossing. The San Diego County Assessor Parcel Number is 295-100-01-00. I pay property taxes on this land. I also have an inherent right to access this land through the park.

30-1

I have reviewed two maps included in the proposed General Plan, one regarding adjacent land use, and one regarding management zones. In both maps, my land is designated as being part of Anza Borrego Desert State Park rather than private property. On the management zone map, my land is designated as part of a wilderness area.

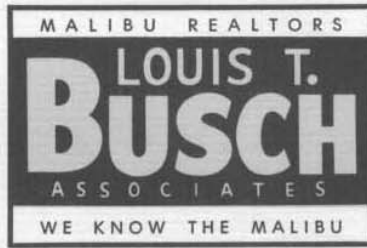
I would like the maps to be corrected to show that my 80 acres is private property, and not part of the park or part of a wilderness area.

Thank you,

Eric Korevaar

California State Parks Responses

#31-1 The location of the private parcel mentioned in this letter is placed incorrectly on the small scale map. The parcel depicted on the first two larger scale maps is well out of the State Park, closer to the Borrego Air Ranch and La Casa del Zorro. If the owner could send more exact details and APN for the 120 acres, the park staff would be happy to clarify the location and association with the park lands.



August 24, 2004

California State Parks
Southern Service Center
8885 Rio San Diego Drive, Suite 270
San Diego, CA 92108
Attention: Tina Robinson

Dear Tina:

31-1 Thank you so much for the disc and information on the preliminary general plan. I'm enclosing the property map outlining my present holdings and the general location of our 120 acres as it relates to the Park's study. It seems as though the property is not included in the preliminary general plan.

Yours truly,

Louis T. Busch

Encl. 3-pages of maps – Borrego Springs, California as stated above



#32-1 Thank you for your support.

#32-2 The ABDSP General Plan only affects the land owned by California State Parks. Therefore, there should be no effect on your property. However, CSP is aware of general planning efforts that are ongoing by the County of San Diego. Potential zoning changes on your property would be within the jurisdiction of the County of San Diego.

#32-3 As suggested, there are many crisscrossing old ranch roads on the newly acquired Vallecito Ranch property. This existing maze of roads and trails will be evaluated as part of the Roads and Trail Management Plans. Roads may be proposed for elimination or new roads may be constructed, consistent with the General Plan goals and guidelines, in order to allow access, recreation, and loop trails in areas decided through the public review process and approved thru the CEQA environmental review process.

Chip Gaylor and Judy Ramírez
35481 Great Southern Overland Stage Route of 1849 • Julian, CA 92036
760.765.0156

September 12, 2004

ATTN: Tina Robinson - copy also sent by fax.
Department of Parks and Recreation
Southern Service Center
8885 Rio San Diego Drive Suite 270
San Diego, CA 92108

To whom it may concern:

We are writing to comment on the adequacy of the Anza Borrego Desert State Park Preliminary General Plan/PDEIR.

We are particularly interested in Area Specific Guidelines pertaining to the Vallecito/Campbell Ranch portion of the Park Wide Management Plan because we own property and live part time adjacent to the recent purchase.

32-1 We understand and generally support the proposed land use designations as stated in the plan. We would also like to express our appreciation for the professional, scientific, and comprehensive approach park personnel are bringing to manage this resource.

Specifically, we appreciate the inclusion of the following on page 3-57:

“GOAL – V/CR 4: Consult with adjoining landowners about their concerns. Facilitate mutual land-management- and interpretive goals.”

32-2 As adjoining small landowners we have two specific concerns regarding plan adequacy:

Will our county zone classification change? If yes, what will the new one be?

32-3 Just how many of the generations of “roads” presently crisscrossing Vallecito will wind up having approved vehicle traffic?

There must be several roads to any desirable destination in the valley. Page 3-14 of the plan has this in the Backcountry Zone description: “Existing roads within the Backcountry Zone provide additional opportunities for visitors of all ability levels to experience the wide variety of settings, resources, and values that the Park has to offer.”

The damage to Vallecito caused by using each and every (or most) of these “existing roads” would not be worth it we believe and will, we hope, be prevented by execution of this plan. We don’t get that message clearly as noted above.

Sincerely,

Chip Gaylor and Judy Ramírez

#33-1 Thank you for your support.

Comment Letter 33 -- Boring

E-MAIL

33-1 I As a resident of Borrego Springs, I am writing to express my approval of the general plan. It is comprehensive and well thought out, an excellent document.

Marsha Boring
P.O. Box 2054
Borrego Springs, CA. 92004

#34-1 Support of Alternative 3 noted. Only street legal vehicles on designated roads are allowed in the Park and the proposed General Plan does not change this restriction. Please also see Response #8-1.

Comment Letter 34 – Lawrence

E-MAIL

From: Sandra and Doug Lawrence
3419 Dickens Street
San Diego, CA 92106
619-222-2351

34-1 | We would like you to reconsider and use the plan that involves the least development in the Anza-Borrego Desert Park; we are especially against opening up any areas to ATV's and motorcycles. Once the desert environment is disrupted; it is not easily repaired, especially with the current lack of money.

Sincerely, Doug and Sandy Lawrence